DELL

A MOVIE CLASSIC

NO. 757

10¢

The true story of JESSE JAMES

A Twentieth Century-Fox Production
Filmed in CinemaScope with
Color by De Luxe

Driven from their home . . .

the James Brothers . . .

hold up station masters . . .

and western banks . . .

living hunted in the hills . . .

until Jesse tries to reform . . .

but can't escape his past.

A CinemaScope Picture

THE TRUE STORY OF JESSE JAMES

Starring

ROBERT WAGNER **JEFFREY HUNTER**

HOPE LANGE

co-starring **AGNES MOOREHEAD**

Produced by **HERBERT B. SWOPE, Jr.**

Directed by **NICHOLAS RAY**

COLOR BY DE LUXE

SCREENPLAY BY WALTER NEWMAN

Based on a Screenplay by Nunnally Johnson

20th Century-Fox

THE TRUE STORY OF JESSE JAMES, No. 757. Published by Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 261 Fifth Ave., New York 16, N. Y.; George T. Delacorte, Jr., President; Helen Meyer, Vice-President; Albert P. Delacorte, Vice-President. Copyright © 1957, by Twentieth Century-Fox Film Corporation. All rights reserved throughout the world. Authorized edition. Printed in U.S.A. Designed and produced by Western Printing & Lithographing Co.

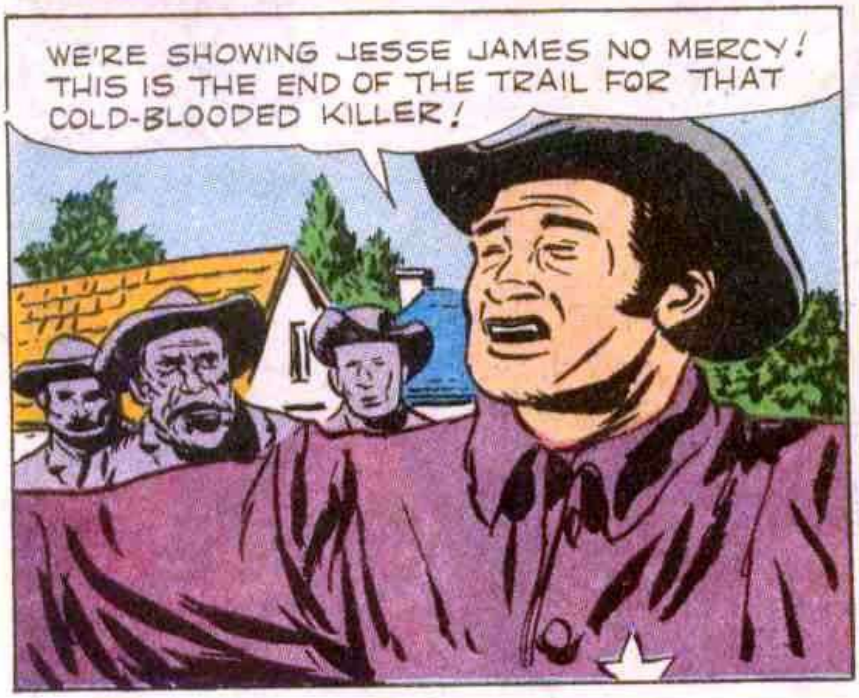
THE TRUE STORY OF JESSE JAMES

SHERIFF! SHERIFF HILLSTROM! ONE OF THEM WAS CALLED JESSE!

THEN IT WAS THE JAMES GANG! AND THEY'RE FOUR HUNDRED MILES FROM THEIR OWN STAMPING GROUNDS! IT'S THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME TO CATCH THEM!
TELEGRAPH

QUICK! SEND A BULLETIN TO EVERY SHERIFF'S OFFICE IN THIS TERRITORY! TELL THEM THE JAMES GANG IS HEADING WEST FROM NORTHFIELD!
YES, SIR!

ALL RIGHT! EVERYBODY WITH A GOOD HORSE MOUNT UP! WE'RE RIDING AFTER THOSE OUTLAWS AND WE'RE NOT COMING BACK TILL WE GET 'EM!
WE'RE WITH YOU, SHERIFF!


WE'RE SHOWING JESSE JAMES NO MERCY! THIS IS THE END OF THE TRAIL FOR THAT COLD-BLOODED KILLER!

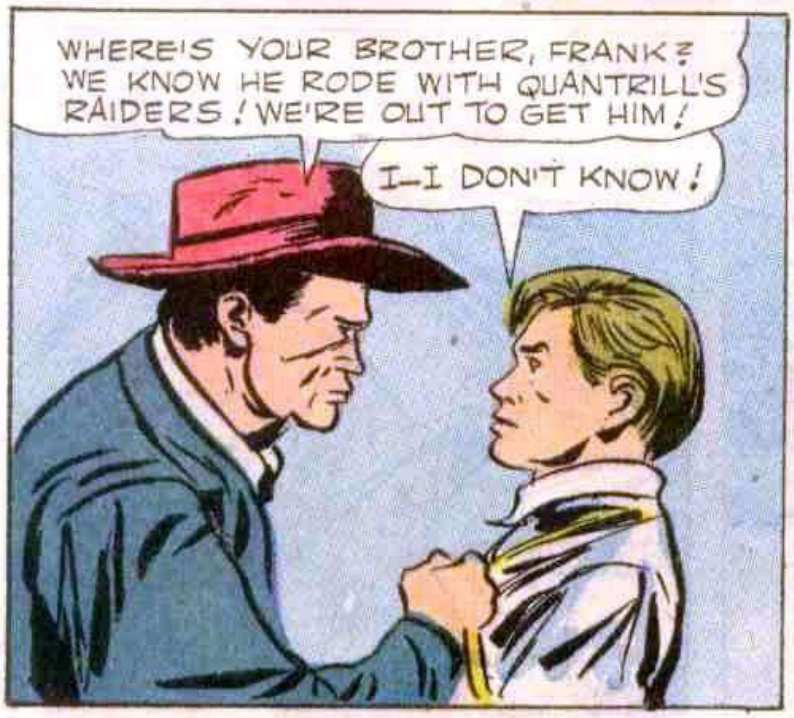
BUT WAS JESSE THE HEARTLESS OUTLAW THAT MANY PEOPLE THOUGHT? OR WAS HE RATHER A PAWN OF FATE, A MAN MISUNDERSTOOD, A VICTIM OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF HIS TIME?

...LET'S GO BACK TO 1864, EIGHTEEN YEARS BEFORE THE NORTHFIELD ROBBERY. JESSE, A MERE LAD OF SIXTEEN, WORKS ON HIS MOTHER'S FARM...
JESSE! JESSE! COME QUICK!

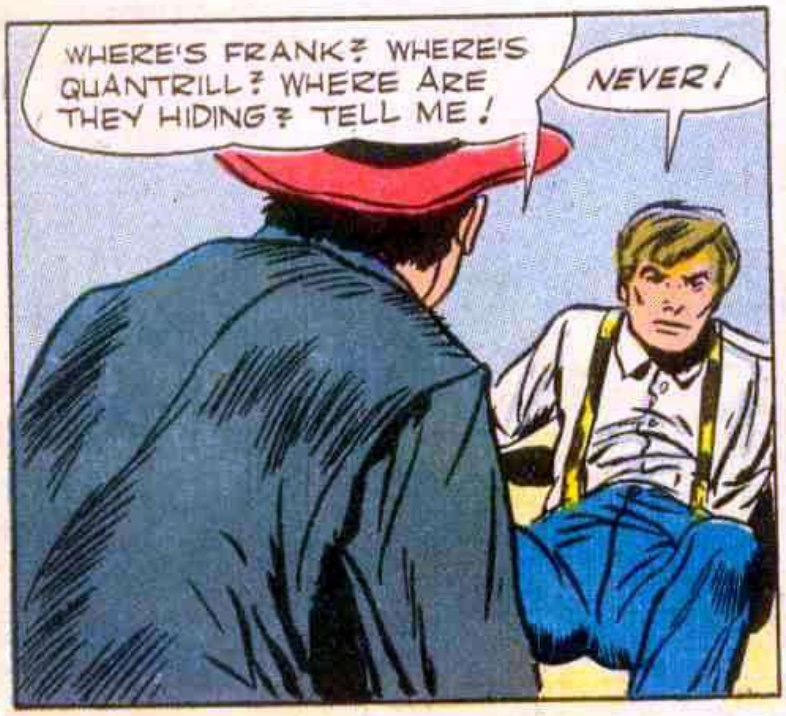
JESSE RUNS TO ANSWER THE ANGUISHED CALL, TO FIND HIS MOTHER HELD BY A BAND OF JAYHAWKERS, IRREGULAR MILITIA FIGHTING FOR THE NORTH IN THE CIVIL WAR...
TAKE YOUR DIRTY HANDS OFF HER, YOU HEAR? LET HER GO!
HAW! HAW! LOOK AT THE BIG HERO!

OOF!

NOW GET ON YOUR FEET! MAYBE YOU'LL TELL US WHAT WE WANT TO KNOW!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?


WHERE'S YOUR BROTHER, FRANK? WE KNOW HE RODE WITH QUANTRILL'S RAIDERS! WE'RE OUT TO GET HIM!
I-I DON'T KNOW!

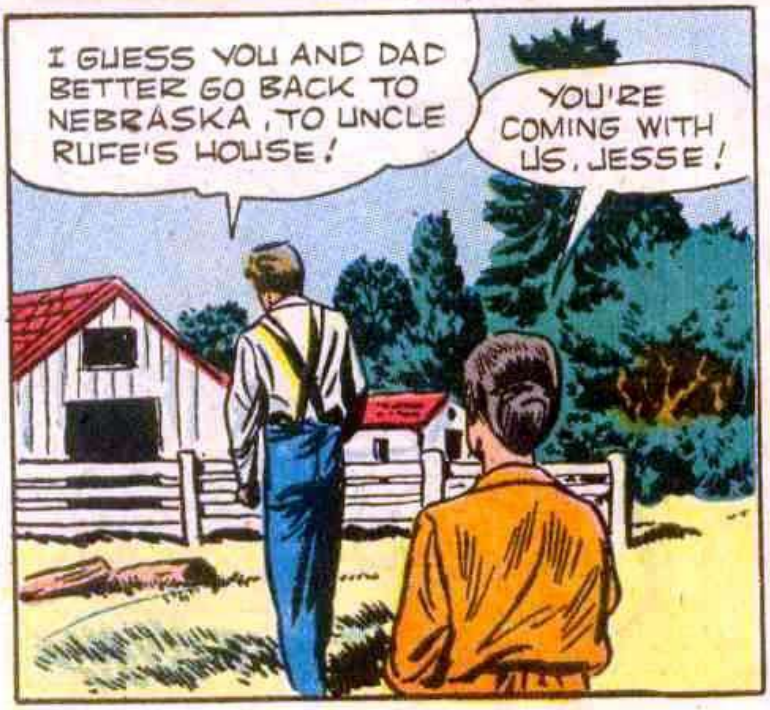
NO? MAYBE THIS WILL REFRESH YOUR MEMORY!
STOP!


WHERE'S FRANK? WHERE'S QUANTRILL? WHERE ARE THEY HIDING? TELL ME!
NEVER!

I'LL FIX YOU!
WAIT A MINUTE! HE WON'T TALK! YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME!

THERE IS ONLY ONE OTHER ANSWER! FOR AIDING THE CONFEDERATE ENEMY, THIS FAMILY HAS ONE DAY TO GET OUT OF HERE, AND ONE WEEK TO GET OUT OF MISSOURI ALTOGETHER!

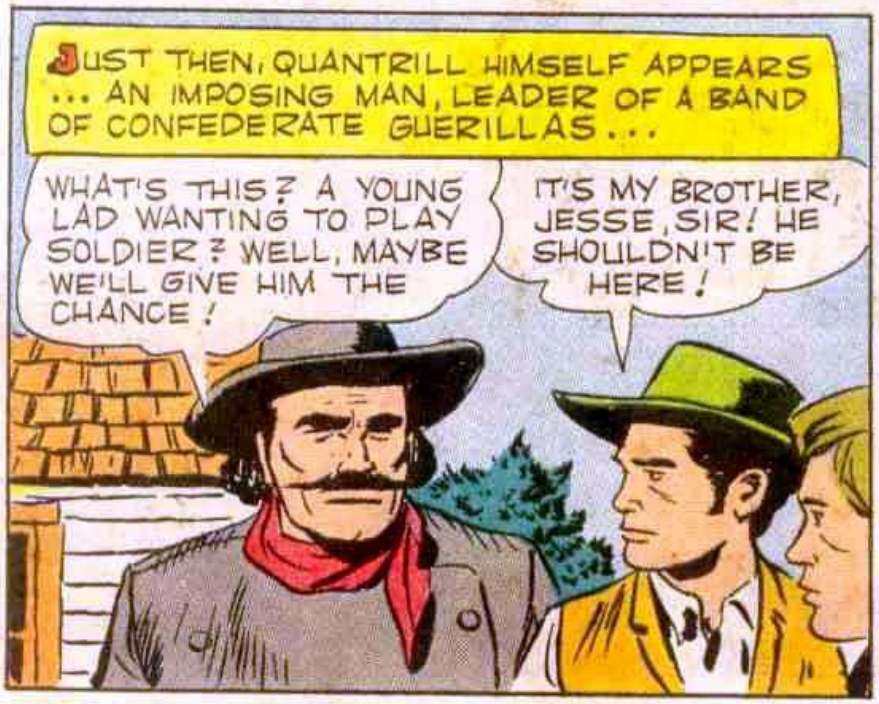
WE'LL BE BACK TO SEE IF YOU'VE OBEYED!
JESSE! JESSE! WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO?

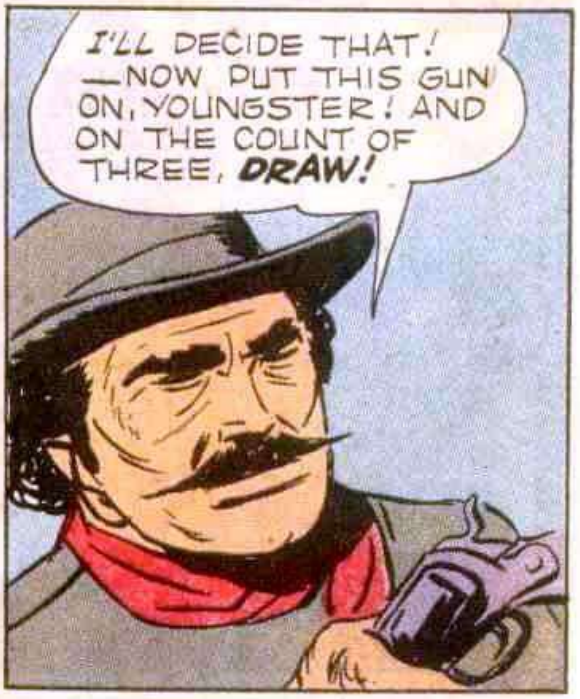

I GUESS YOU AND DAD BETTER GO BACK TO NEBRASKA, TO UNCLE RUFE'S HOUSE!
YOU'RE COMING WITH US, JESSE!

NO, MA! I'M GOING TO JOIN QUANTRILL —AND FRANK... GOOD-BYE!
BUT YOU'RE TOO YOUNG, JESSE! TOO YOUNG!

THAT SEEMED TO BE THE START OF JESSE'S WILD RIDE ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE LAW! ON THE NEXT DAY, HE GALLOPED INTO QUANTRILL'S CAMP...
JESSE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
I CAME TO JOIN UP, FRANK!

BUT YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE HOME, TAKING CARE OF THE FARM!
THE FARM'S EMPTY NOW! THE JAYHAWKERS DROVE MOM AND DAD OUT OF THE STATE!


JUST THEN, QUANTRILL HIMSELF APPEARS ... AN IMPOSING MAN, LEADER OF A BAND OF CONFEDERATE GUERILLAS...
WHAT'S THIS? A YOUNG LAD WANTING TO PLAY SOLDIER? WELL, MAYBE WE'LL GIVE HIM THE CHANCE!
IT'S MY BROTHER, JESSE, SIR! HE SHOULDN'T BE HERE!


I'LL DECIDE THAT! —NOW PUT THIS GUN ON, YOUNGSTER! AND ON THE COUNT OF THREE, DRAW!

ONE...TWO...
NO, WAIT! HE'S JUST A KID!

THREE!

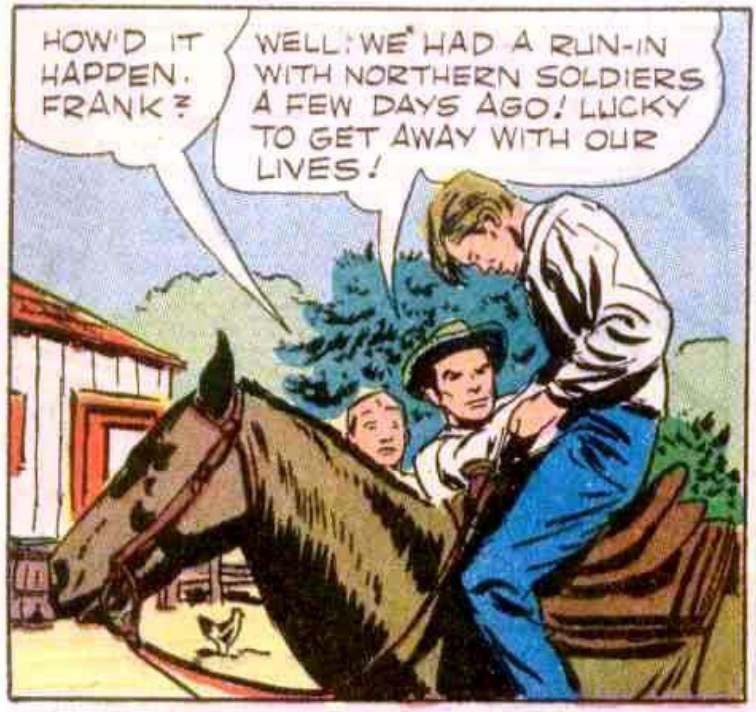
BUT AS JESSE DRAWS...

I LIKE YOUR COURAGE, JESSE! I THINK YOU'LL DO! AND THAT'S YOUR GUN NOW! WEAR IT PROUDLY!
I WILL SIR!

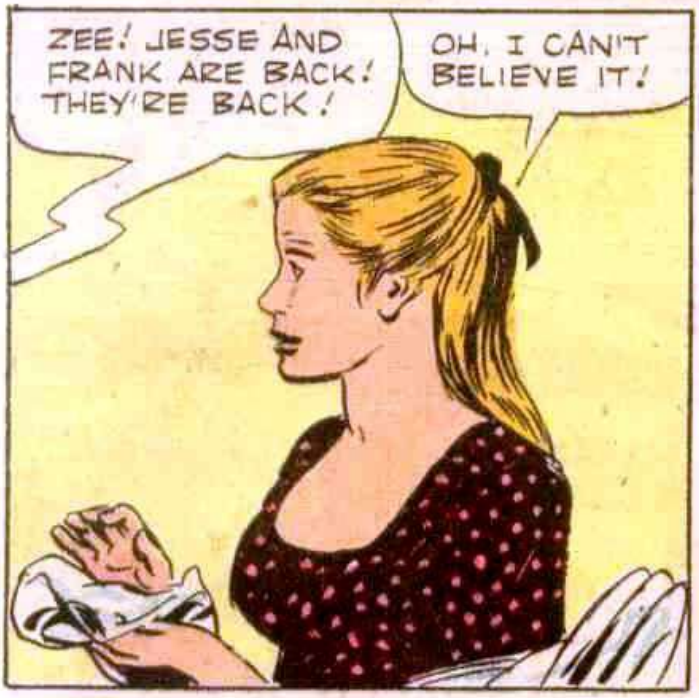
AND SO, JESSE AND FRANK RODE WITH QUANTRILL'S RAIDERS FOR MANY MONTHS AS THEY HARASSED THE NORTHERN FORCES FROM EVERY SIDE! BUT FINALLY, THE WAR ENDED IN DEFEAT FOR THE SOUTH, AND THE WEARY GUERRILLA BAND DISPERSED, EACH GOING HIS OWN WAY...

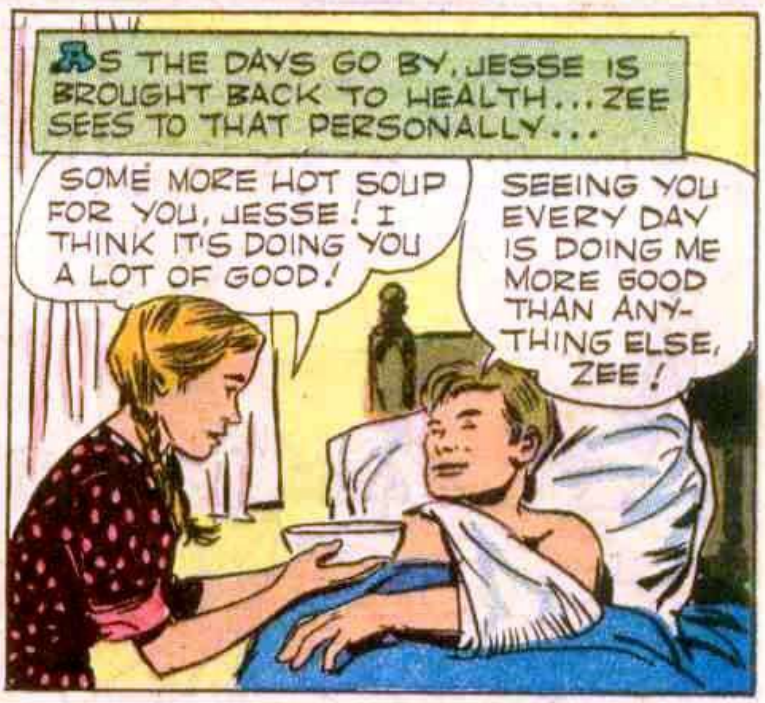
WEEKS LATER, JESSE AND FRANK ARE HEADING TOWARD THEIR UNCLE RUFE'S FARM IN NEBRASKA...
I SEE THE FARM UP AHEAD NOW, JESS! HOW DO YOU FEEL?
ALL RIGHT, I GUESS! SURE BE GLAD TO GET THERE, THOUGH!

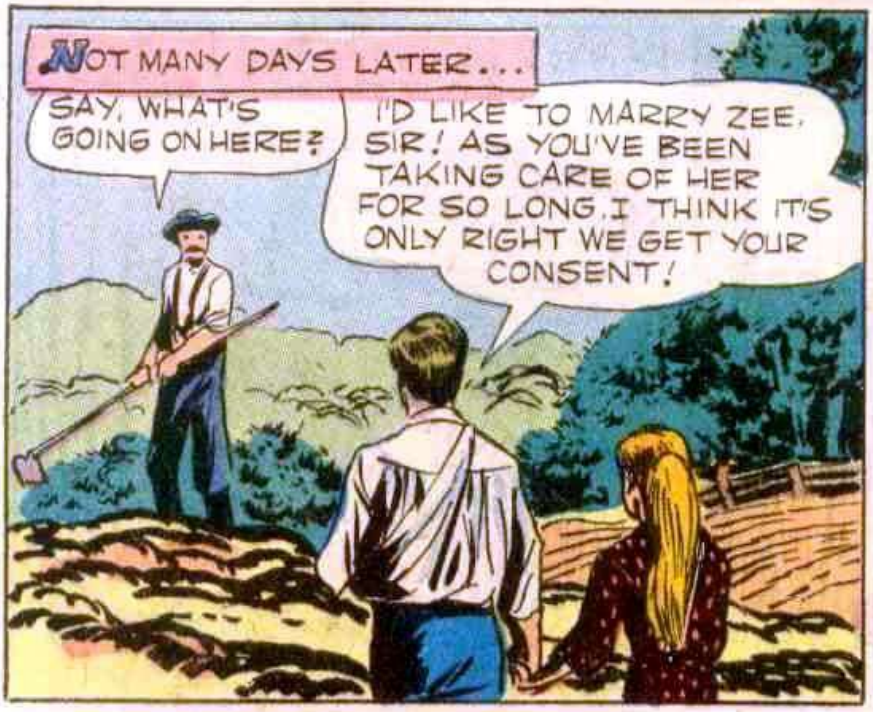
FRANK! FRANK— AND JESSE!
WE'RE BACK, MA! I'M ALL RIGHT, BUT JESSE'S BEEN SHOT!


HOW'D IT HAPPEN, FRANK?
WELL: WE HAD A RUN-IN WITH NORTHERN SOLDIERS A FEW DAYS AGO! LUCKY TO GET AWAY WITH OUR LIVES!

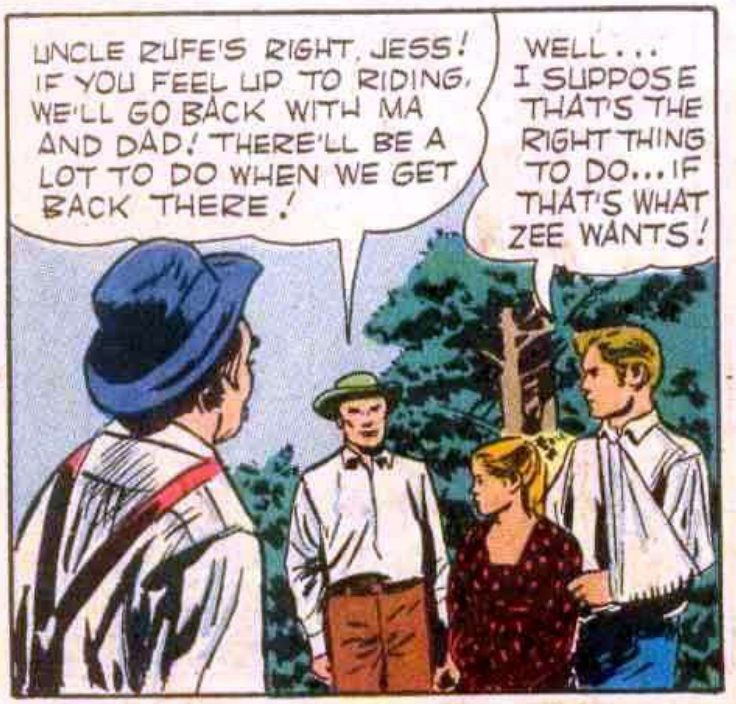
BUT THE WAR'S BEEN OVER FOR A MONTH NOW!
NOT FOR THE MEN WHO RODE WITH QUANTRILL! WE TRIED TO SURRENDER, BUT THE SOLDIERS ONLY FIRED AT US! THAT'S HOW I GOT SHOT!

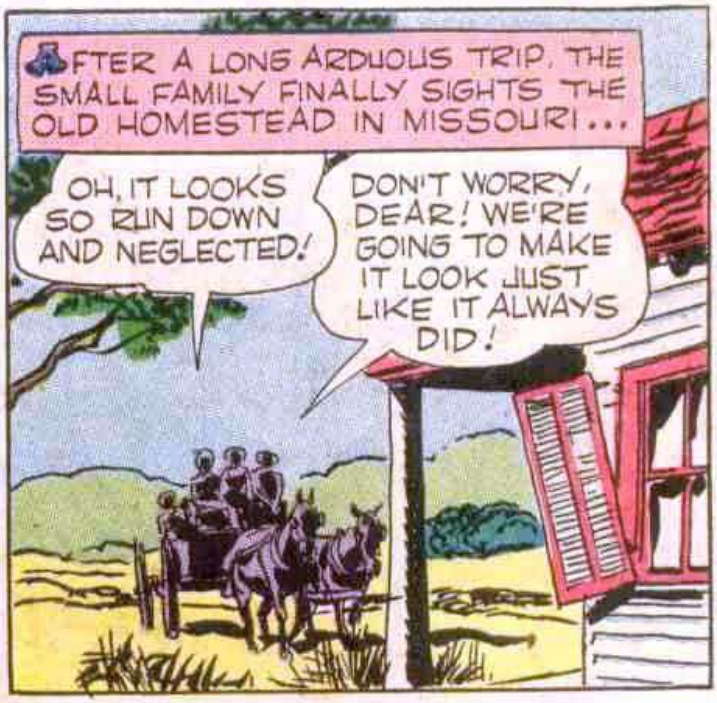

ZEE! JESSE AND FRANK ARE BACK! THEY'RE BACK!
OH, I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!


AS THE DAYS GO BY, JESSE IS BROUGHT BACK TO HEALTH... ZEE SEES TO THAT PERSONALLY...
SOME MORE HOT SOUP FOR YOU, JESSE! I THINK IT'S DOING YOU A LOT OF GOOD!
SEEING YOU EVERY DAY IS DOING ME MORE GOOD THAN ANYTHING ELSE, ZEE!


NOT MANY DAYS LATER...
SAY, WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
I'D LIKE TO MARRY ZEE, SIR! AS YOU'VE BEEN TAKING CARE OF HER FOR SO LONG, I THINK IT'S ONLY RIGHT WE GET YOUR CONSENT!

IT'S ALL RIGHT WITH ME, JESSE! BUT I THINK IT WOULD BE FAIRER TO ZEE IF YOU WENT BACK TO YOUR FARM IN MISSOURI FIRST! GET IT IN SHAPE AND BRING IN A GOOD CROP! THEN COME AND GET ZEE!


UNCLE RUFE'S RIGHT, JESS! IF YOU FEEL UP TO RIDING, WE'LL GO BACK WITH MA AND DAD! THERE'LL BE A LOT TO DO WHEN WE GET BACK THERE!
WELL... I SUPPOSE THAT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO... IF THAT'S WHAT ZEE WANTS!

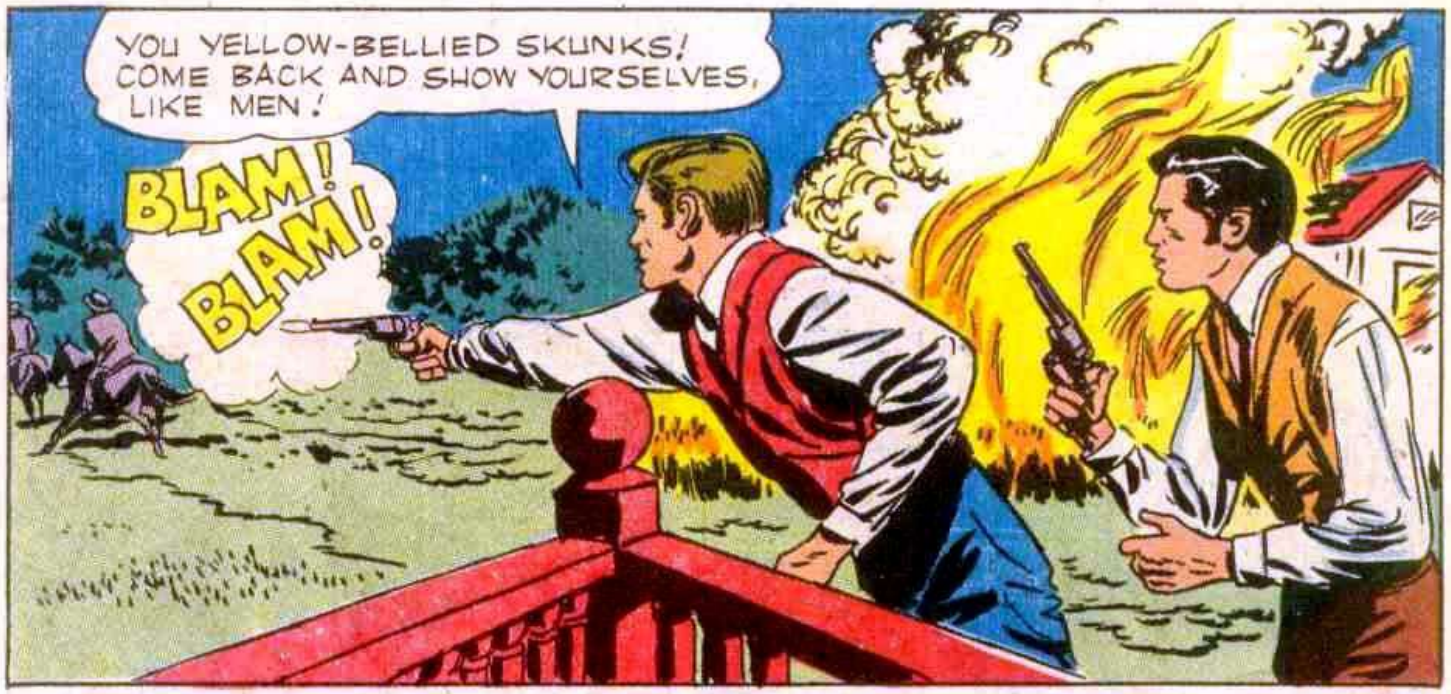

AFTER A LONG ARDUOUS TRIP, THE SMALL FAMILY FINALLY SIGHTS THE OLD HOMESTEAD IN MISSOURI...
OH, IT LOOKS SO RUN DOWN AND NEGLECTED!
DON'T WORRY, DEAR! WE'RE GOING TO MAKE IT LOOK JUST LIKE IT ALWAYS DID!

FROM THEN ON, THERE WAS ONLY HARD WORK FROM MORNING TILL NIGHT...
GEE-UP, THERE! YA-A-A!

BUT THE TOIL PAID OFF IN A BOUNTIFUL CROP AND A WARM, SECURE HOUSE...
IT'S JUST LIKE THE OLD DAYS NOW... LONG BEFORE THE WAR!
LET'S HOPE NOTHING HAPPENS TO DESTROY THIS PEACE!

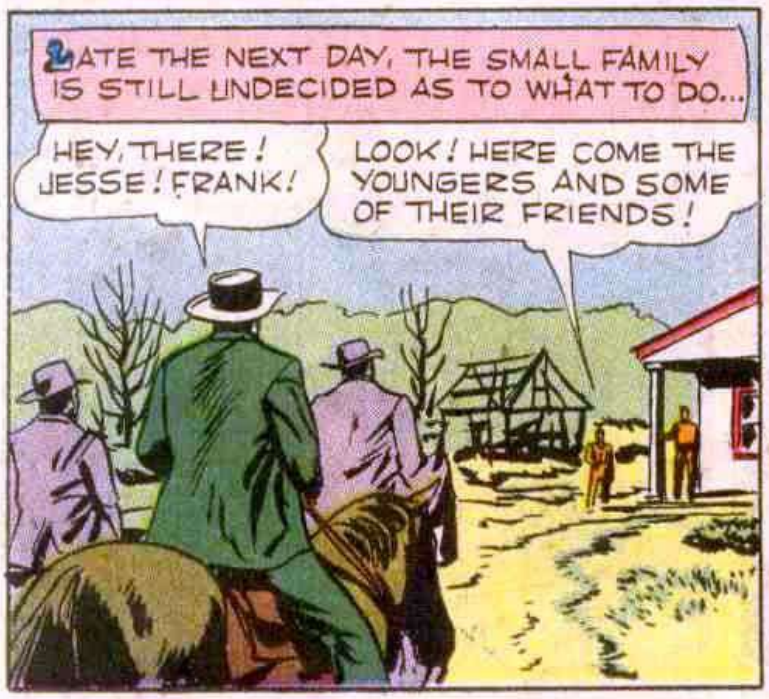
BUT PEACE WAS NOT TO BE THEIRS! THAT VERY NIGHT...
OH! WHAT IS THAT?
BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!
Our Home

IT'S A RAID! THEY'RE BURNING OUR CROPS!
THE BARN'S ON FIRE, TOO!


YOU YELLOW-BELLIED SKUNKS! COME BACK AND SHOW YOURSELVES, LIKE MEN!
BLAM! BLAM!

WHAT'S THIS?

SO THAT'S IT! THEY'LL NEVER FORGET WE RODE WITH QUANTRILL'S RAIDERS!
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE RUINED AGAIN, FRANK! WHAT'S THE USE OF TRYING ANY MORE?
THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS TO QUANTRILL'S MEN! GET OUT!


LATE THE NEXT DAY, THE SMALL FAMILY IS STILL UNDECIDED AS TO WHAT TO DO...
HEY, THERE! JESSE! FRANK!
LOOK! HERE COME THE YOUNGERS AND SOME OF THEIR FRIENDS!

WE HEARD WHAT HAPPENED OUT HERE! ANY IDEA WHO DID IT?
NOT EXACTLY, COLE! MUST HAVE BEEN SOME RAGTAGS FROM THE NORTHERN ARMY! BUT WE COULDN'T SEE THEIR FACES!

WELL, WE'RE HEADING INTO TOWN FOR A LITTLE FUN! WHY DON'T YOU COME ALONG AND FORGET YOUR TROUBLES FOR A WHILE?
NO! WE'VE GOT A LOT TO DO AROUND HERE!

NOT FOR ME, FRANK! I'VE HAD MY FILL OF WORK FOR A WHILE! I'M GOING WITH THE YOUNGERS!
THAT'S THE SPIRIT, JESS!

DON'T GO, JESSE!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, FRANK! HE'S YOUNG! HE'LL BE BACK!

SOME TIME LATER, AS JESSE RIDES WITH THE YOUNGERS, THEIR "FUN" GETS OUT OF HAND...
BLAM!
YAAR HOOO!

HEY! I WONDER WHAT'S INSIDE THE EXPRESS OFFICE?
ESS OFFICE

LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY FORGOT TO PUT AWAY A STRONG BOX! MAYBE THERE'S MONEY IN IT, JESSE!
HOLD ON, COLE!

LOOK AT THAT! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE! WE'RE RICH!
BUT THAT'S ROBBERY, COLE!.

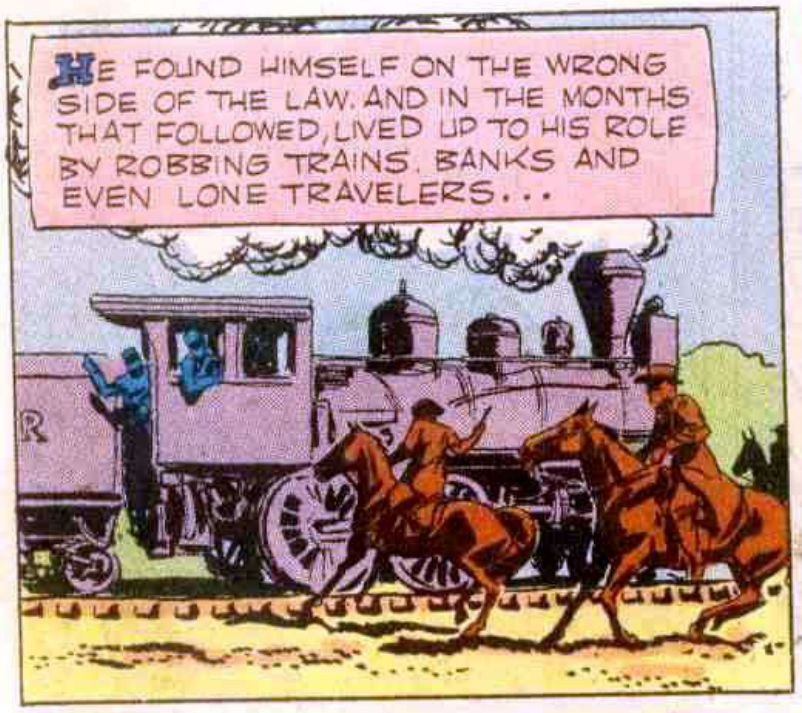
SO WHAT? COME ON, LET'S GO BEFORE SOMEONE FINDS US!

LATER THAT NIGHT, JESSE RETURNS TO THE SAMUEL FARM, HIS POCKETS BULGING WITH MONEY...
WHAT'S THE IDEA OF THIS? —HAVE YOU LOST YOUR MIND, JESSE? HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU WE CAN'T AFFORD TROUBLE?!
LET ME EXPLAIN... HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

WE'RE TAKING THIS MONEY BACK! YOU'RE GOING TO APOLOGIZE AND EXPLAIN!
WE WERE JUST HAVING SOME FUN! NOBODY GOT HURT— AND NOTHING'S GOING TO HAPPEN!

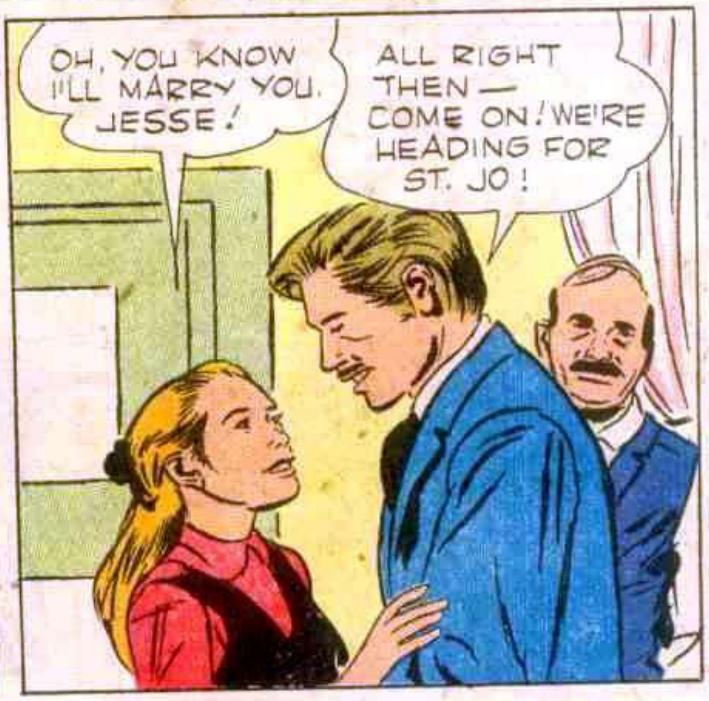
SUDDENLY THE YOUNGERS RACE UP...
JESSE! THERE'S TROUBLE! WHEN WE GOT HOME, A SQUAD OF TROOPERS WAS WAITING! THEY'RE AFTER US!
WELL, WAIT UP! I'LL COME WITH YOU!

TIME WAS TO SEE JESSE AND THE GANG FINALLY OUTRIDE THE FEDERAL TROOPERS, BUT SOMEHOW, THIS SEEMED TO BE THE START OF JESSE'S CAREER OF ROBBING AND KILLING...

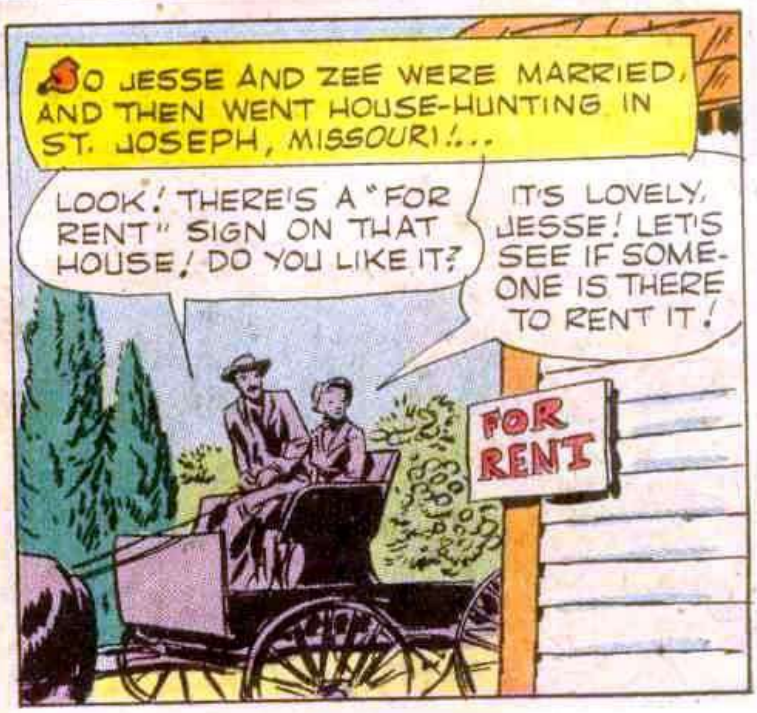

HE FOUND HIMSELF ON THE WRONG SIDE OF THE LAW. AND IN THE MONTHS THAT FOLLOWED, LIVED UP TO HIS ROLE BY ROBBING TRAINS, BANKS AND EVEN LONE TRAVELERS...

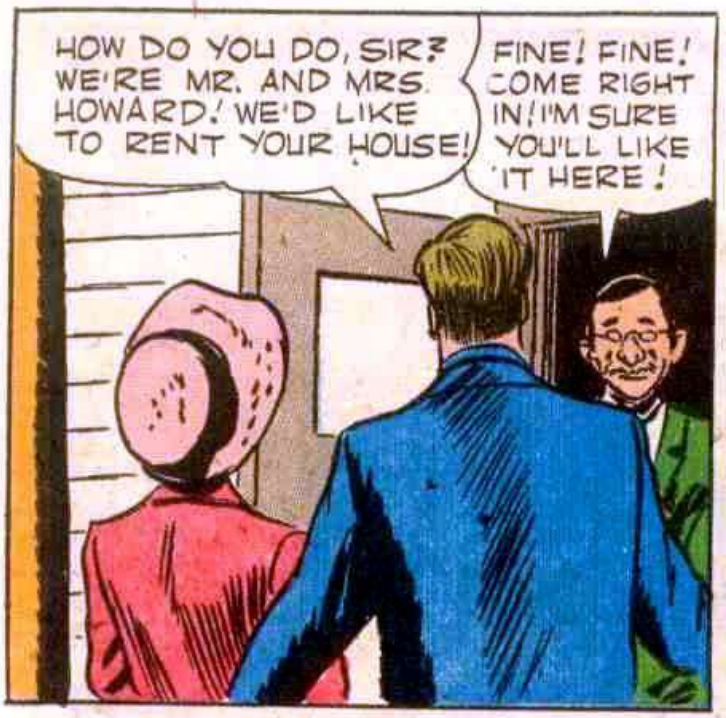
ONE NIGHT, JESSE AND THE GANG SHOWED UP OUTSIDE HIS UNCLE RUFE'S HOUSE...
WAIT HERE, BOYS! I'M ON MY WAY TO ASK A GIRL TO BE MY WIFE!
GOOD LUCK!

PRESENTLY...
JESSE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE AT THIS HOUR?
I WANT TO ASK ZEE TO MARRY ME, RUFE! I CAN AFFORD A WIFE NOW!


OH, YOU KNOW I'LL MARRY YOU, JESSE!
ALL RIGHT THEN — COME ON! WE'RE HEADING FOR ST. JO!

HERE, RUFE! THIS'LL HELP PAY YOU BACK A LITTLE FOR TAKING CARE OF ZEE ALL THIS TIME!
THANKS, JESSE!


SO JESSE AND ZEE WERE MARRIED, AND THEN WENT HOUSE-HUNTING IN ST. JOSEPH, MISSOURI!...
LOOK! THERE'S A "FOR RENT" SIGN ON THAT HOUSE! DO YOU LIKE IT?
IT'S LOVELY, JESSE! LET'S SEE IF SOMEONE IS THERE TO RENT IT!
FOR RENT

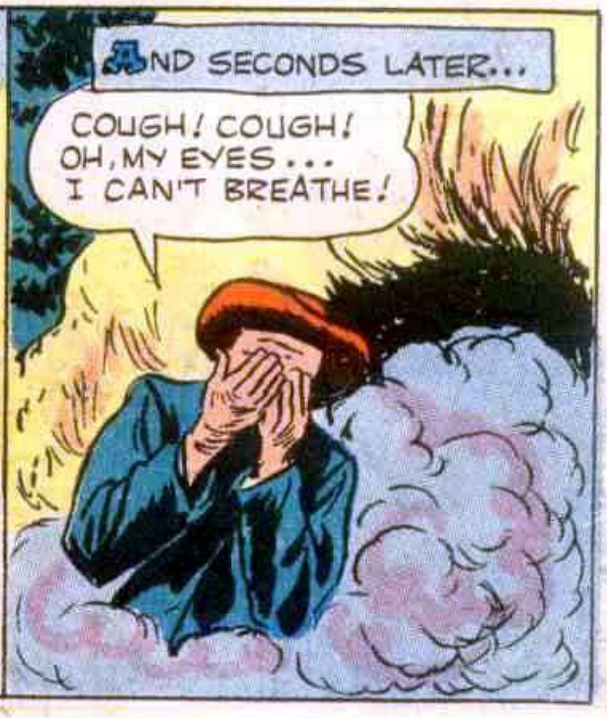

HOW DO YOU DO, SIR? WE'RE MR. AND MRS. HOWARD! WE'D LIKE TO RENT YOUR HOUSE!
FINE! FINE! COME RIGHT IN! I'M SURE YOU'LL LIKE IT HERE!

MINUTES LATER...
OH, PLEASE DON'T GO NOW, JESSE! THIS IS SUCH A STRANGE PLACE TO ME!
I'M SORRY, ZEE, BUT I HAVE TO GO! REMEMBER YOUR PROMISE— NO QUESTIONS — EVER!

WE RETURN TO THE PRESENT— IT IS JUST AFTER THE NORTHFIELD ROBBERY AND SHERIFF HILLSTROM BELIEVES HE AND HIS POSSE HAVE TRAPPED THE JAMES GANG IN A SMALL CAVE...
THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO DRIVE THEM OUT OF THERE! I DON'T FEEL LIKE SITTING AROUND HERE UNTIL THEY'RE READY TO COME OUT! SO WE'LL USE THIS DYNAMITE!
BUT THAT MIGHT KILL THEM, SHERIFF!

NOT LIKELY! DYNAMITE'S TOO SMALL! BUT IT'LL SURE SCARE 'EM OUT!

BOOM!


AND SECONDS LATER...
COUGH! COUGH! OH, MY EYES... I CAN'T BREATHE!

THIS ISN'T JESSE JAMES! I KNOW HIM! HE'S SAM WELLS!
AND, THE CAVE'S EMPTY! THE REST OF THE GANG HAS GIVEN US THE SLIP ...FOR THE TIME BEING!

MEANWHILE, NOT FAR AWAY...
WE'D BETTER HEAD UP THIS WAY! THEN WE CAN REALLY GIVE THAT POSSE A RUNAROUND!
WAIT A MINUTE, JESSE! IT MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA IF WE SPLIT UP HERE! MAKE IT TWICE AS HARD ON THE POSSE!

ALL RIGHT, COLE! WE'LL MEET YOU BACK IN MISSOURI!
ADIOS, JESSE!

COLE, JIM AND BOB HAVE RIDDEN ONLY A SHORT WAY, WHEN...
COLE! OVER THERE! THE POSSE! THEY'VE CIRCLED AND CUT US OFF!

INTO THE SWAMP, FAST! IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE!

SPREAD OUT, MEN! COVER EVERY INCH OF THAT SWAMP! THEY'RE IN THERE SOMEWHERE!

EASY, NOW! SLOW... SLOW...

DUCK! THEY'RE HIDING IN THAT THICK PATCH OF BRUSH!

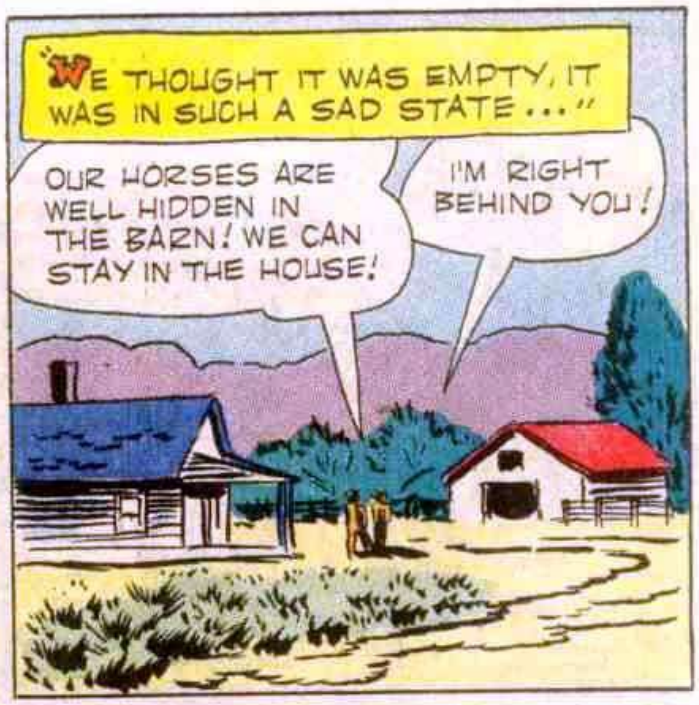
COME OUT OF THERE WITH YOUR HANDS UP, ALL OF YOU, OR WE'LL CARRY YOU OUT! YOU'RE SURROUNDED!
BLAM!
BLAM!

WE KNOW WHEN WE'RE LICKED, SHERIFF! DON'T SHOOT!
WE GIVE UP!

WHERE'S THE REST OF THE GANG? WHERE'D YOU SPLIT UP?
SORRY, SHERIFF, I JUST CAN'T REMEMBER!

THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO TURN IN THE WORST KILLER THE WEST HAS EVER HAD! BETTER TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT!
OH, JESSE'S NOT SO BAD, SHERIFF! YOU MIGHT EVEN SAY HE IS KIND-HEARTED IN A WAY...

KIND-HEARTED? JESSE JAMES? HA! THAT'S A LAUGH!
DON'T BE SO SURE, SHERIFF! I REMEMBER ONCE, BACK IN MISSOURI, WHEN JESSE AND I TOOK REFUGE IN AN OLD FARMHOUSE...


"WE THOUGHT IT WAS EMPTY, IT WAS IN SUCH A SAD STATE..."
OUR HORSES ARE WELL HIDDEN IN THE BARN! WE CAN STAY IN THE HOUSE!
I'M RIGHT BEHIND YOU!

WELL? WHAT IS IT?
OH, SORRY, MA'AM! WE DIDN'T THINK ANYONE LIVED HERE!

WELL, YOU WERE ALMOST RIGHT! I LIVE HERE ALONE! AND PRETTY SOON I WON'T EVEN BE HERE... CAN'T PAY THE MORTGAGE!

HOW MUCH IS THE MORTGAGE, IF I MAY ASK, MA'AM?
SIX HUNDRED DOLLARS! AND IT MIGHT AS WELL BE SIX MILLION!

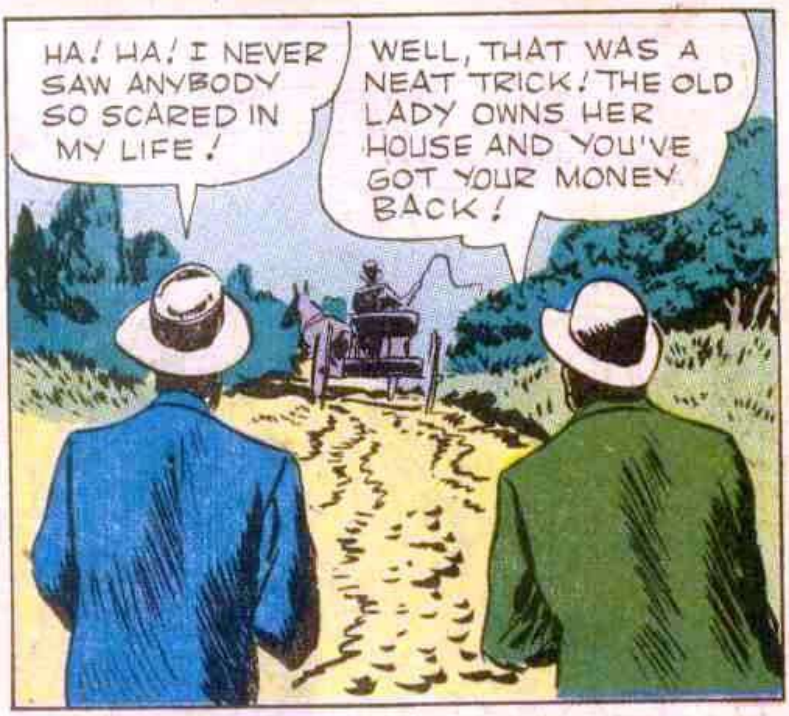
I'LL GIVE YOU THE SIX HUNDRED, MA'AM! ALL I ASK IS THAT YOU LET ME AND MY FRIEND LAY LOW HERE FOR A FEW DAYS!
I-I CAN'T BELIEVE IT... OF COURSE YOU CAN STAY HERE AS LONG AS YOU LIKE!

BY THE WAY, WHEN DOES THE OWNER COME TO COLLECT HIS MONEY?
OH, THE OLD SKINFLINT SHOULD BE HERE! TOMORROW OR THE NEXT DAY!

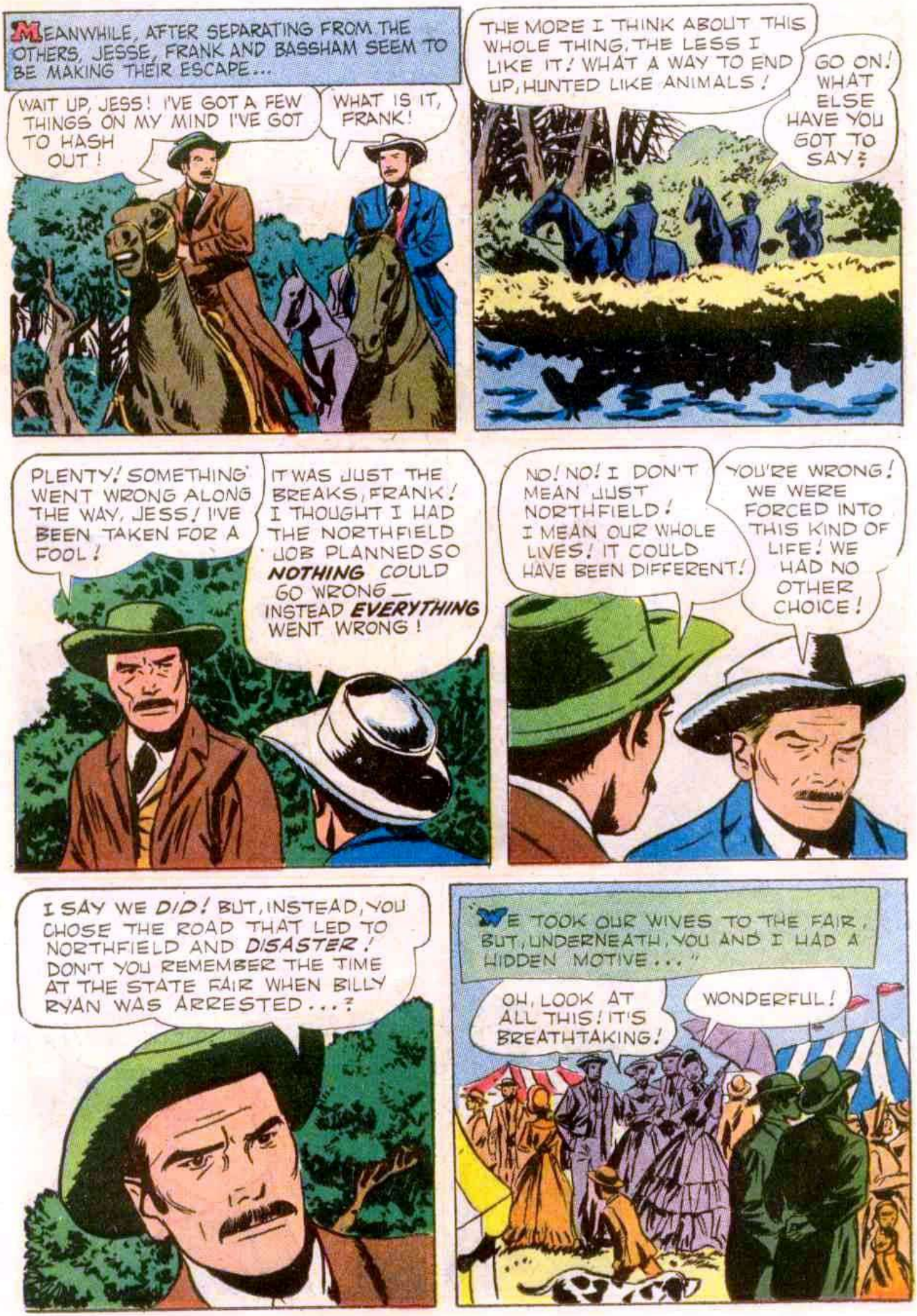
"AND SO, WHEN THE OWNER CAME AROUND TO COLLECT HIS MONEY, JESSE AND I WAITED NEARBY IN THE BUSHES . . ."
QUIET, COLE! HE HAS TO PASS RIGHT BY HERE!

UP WITH YOUR HANDS, YOU OLD VULTURE!
WHAT IS THIS?

I'LL TAKE THIS! H-M-M! A NICE TIDY SUM OF SIX HUNDRED!
P-PLEASE — D-DON'T SH-SHOOT!


HA! HA! I NEVER SAW ANYBODY SO SCARED IN MY LIFE!
WELL, THAT WAS A NEAT TRICK! THE OLD LADY OWNS HER HOUSE AND YOU'VE GOT YOUR MONEY BACK!

SO YOU SEE, SHERIFF, JESSE JAMES HAD A HEART!
BAH! WHAT'S THAT BESIDE OF ALL HIS KILLINGS? TAKE MY WORD, WE'RE BRINGING JAMES TO JUSTICE . . . AND SOON!


MEANWHILE, AFTER SEPARATING FROM THE OTHERS, JESSE, FRANK AND BASSHAM SEEM TO BE MAKING THEIR ESCAPE...
WAIT UP, JESS! I'VE GOT A FEW THINGS ON MY MIND I'VE GOT TO HASH OUT!
WHAT IS IT, FRANK!
THE MORE I THINK ABOUT THIS WHOLE THING, THE LESS I LIKE IT! WHAT A WAY TO END UP, HUNTED LIKE ANIMALS!
GO ON! WHAT ELSE HAVE YOU GOT TO SAY?
PLENTY! SOMETHING WENT WRONG ALONG THE WAY, JESS! I'VE BEEN TAKEN FOR A FOOL!
IT WAS JUST THE BREAKS, FRANK! I THOUGHT I HAD THE NORTHFIELD JOB PLANNED SO NOTHING COULD GO WRONG — INSTEAD EVERYTHING WENT WRONG!
NO! NO! I DON'T MEAN JUST NORTHFIELD! I MEAN OUR WHOLE LIVES! IT COULD HAVE BEEN DIFFERENT!
YOU'RE WRONG! WE WERE FORCED INTO THIS KIND OF LIFE! WE HAD NO OTHER CHOICE!
I SAY WE DID! BUT, INSTEAD, YOU CHOSE THE ROAD THAT LED TO NORTHFIELD AND DISASTER! DON'T YOU REMEMBER THE TIME AT THE STATE FAIR WHEN BILLY RYAN WAS ARRESTED...?
"WE TOOK OUR WIVES TO THE FAIR, BUT, UNDERNEATH, YOU AND I HAD A HIDDEN MOTIVE..."
OH, LOOK AT ALL THIS! IT'S BREATHTAKING!
WONDERFUL!

"SO WHILE ZEE AND ANNE WERE HAVING A GOOD TIME, WE SLIPPED AWAY TO MEET BILLY RYAN... AND ROB THE TICKET OFFICE..."

"MINUTES LATER, AT THE TICKET OFFICE, UNSEEN BY ANYONE..."
GOOD WORK, BILLY! NOW GET TO YOUR HORSE FAST! WE'LL MEET YOU LATER!
OKAY, JESSE!
TICK

HELP! STOP THAT THIEF! HE JUST ROBBED THE TICKET OFFICE!
UH-OH!

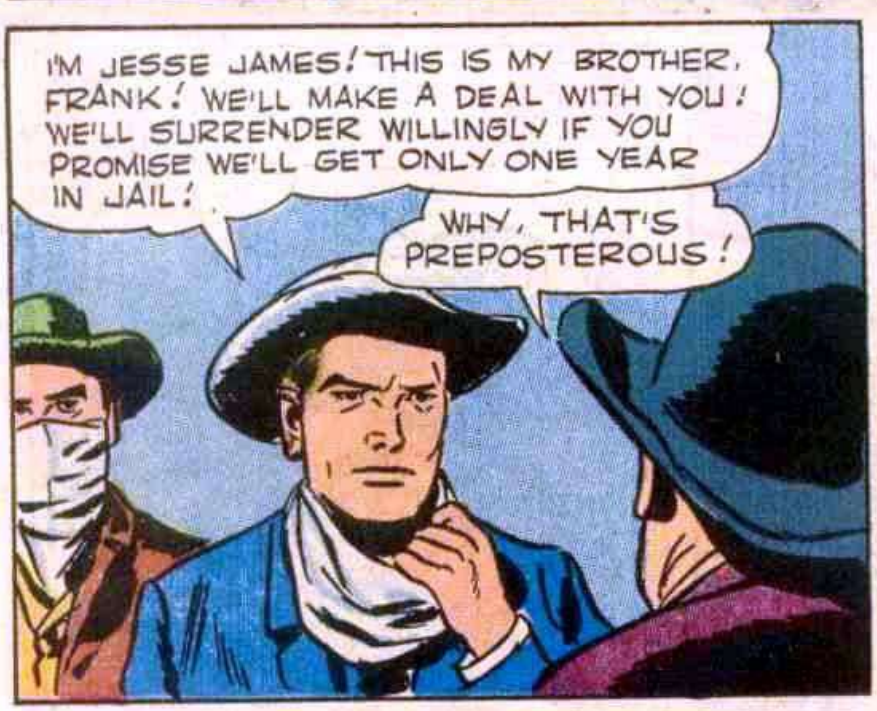
"BUT AS RYAN FLED, HIS HORSE STUMBLED..."

WOW! HE SURE HAD A PILE OF IT HERE!
DON'T TRY ANYTHING FUNNY, MISTER! THE SHERIFF'S ON HIS WAY!

"BILLY WAS BROUGHT TO TRIAL AND FOUND GUILTY. HE DIDN'T DARE TO TELL ON US, FOR FEAR WE WOULD GET REVENGE..."
THE COURT SENTENCES BILL RYAN TO 25 YEARS OF HARD LABOR! WE ALSO CONGRATULATE THE JURY FOR ITS COURAGE IN CONVICTING— FOR THE FIRST TIME— A MEMBER OF THE JAMES GANG!

"LATER, WE DEVISED A PLAN AND WAITED TO SEE THE ATTORNEY WHO SENT BILLY UP... SEE HIM IN PRIVATE..."
HERE HE COMES NOW!

WE WANT A WORD WITH YOU, MISTER!
AND WHO ARE YOU?


I'M JESSE JAMES! THIS IS MY BROTHER, FRANK! WE'LL MAKE A DEAL WITH YOU! WE'LL SURRENDER WILLINGLY IF YOU PROMISE WE'LL GET ONLY ONE YEAR IN JAIL!
WHY, THAT'S PREPOSTEROUS!

THE ONLY THING I CAN PROMISE YOU IS A LIGHTER TERM IF YOU SURRENDER! YOUR DAYS ARE ABOUT OVER, ANYWAY, WHETHER YOU WANT TO ADMIT IT OR NOT!

HE'S RIGHT, JESS! LET'S DO IT! GET THE WHOLE THING OFF OUR CHESTS!
NO! I'M NOT ROTTING IN ANY JAIL! IT'S ONE YEAR OR NOTHING!

HE'S GONE! WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE NOW!
YES, LET'S RUN! LIKE WE'VE BEEN DOING FOR YEARS!

THEN THERE WAS ANOTHER TIME WHEN WE HAD A CHOICE! THE TIME WE RETURNED HOME FOR A VISIT WITH MOM...

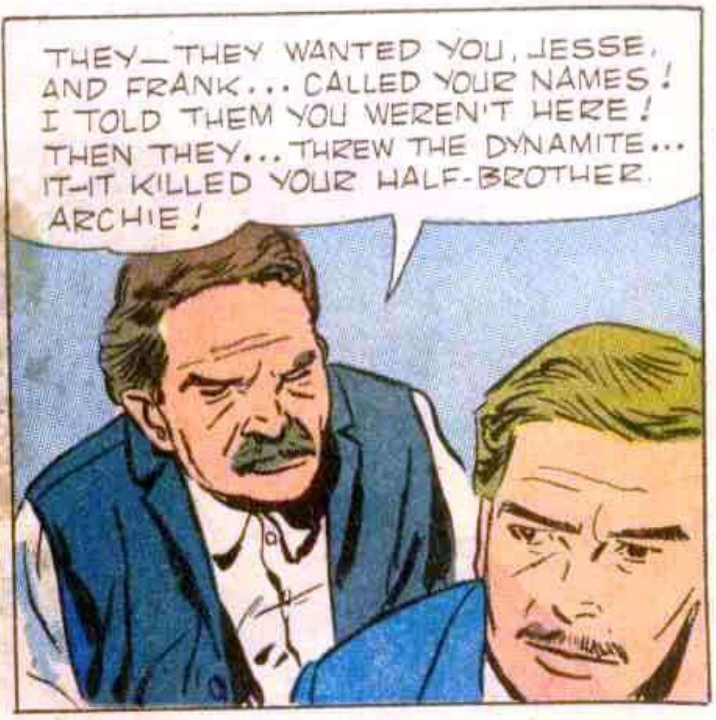
"WE WERE ALMOST THERE WHEN WE HEARD AN EXPLOSION..."
THAT CAME FROM THE HOUSE!
LET'S GET OVER THERE!

THE DIRTY SKUNKS! THEY'VE DYNAMITED THE HOUSE!
I RECOGNIZE ONE OF THEM, FRANK! IT'S ASKEW, ONE OF OUR NEIGHBORS!

MOM! MOM! WHERE ARE YOU?

DAD! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? WHERE'S MOM?
SHE—SHE'S ALL RIGHT NOW, I THINK! I'VE BANDAGED HER — ARM...

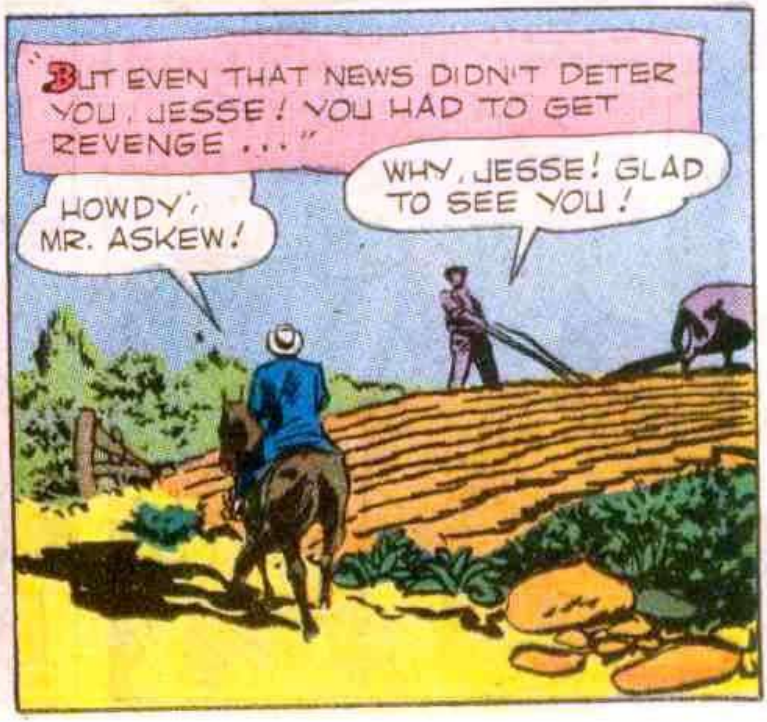
MOM, IT'S ME, JESSE! AND FRANK! WE'RE GOING TO HELP YOU!
I DON'T KNOW, JESSE! I JUST DON'T KNOW...


THEY—THEY WANTED YOU, JESSE, AND FRANK... CALLED YOUR NAMES! I TOLD THEM YOU WEREN'T HERE! THEN THEY... THREW THE DYNAMITE... IT-IT KILLED YOUR HALF-BROTHER ARCHIE!

"BUT WORD OF THAT ATTACK GOT AROUND. THE STATE SENATOR HIMSELF BROUGHT UP THE SUBJECT IN A SPECIAL SESSION..."

THIS IS OUTRAGEOUS! I THINK THE JAMES BOYS AND THEIR FAMILY HAVE BEEN PERSECUTED ENOUGH—FOR THEIR PART WITH THE QUANTRILL RAIDERS...

THEREFORE, I HAVE PREPARED A BILL WHICH, IF PASSED, WILL GIVE THE JAMES BOYS A COMPLETE PARDON!
HEAR! HEAR!

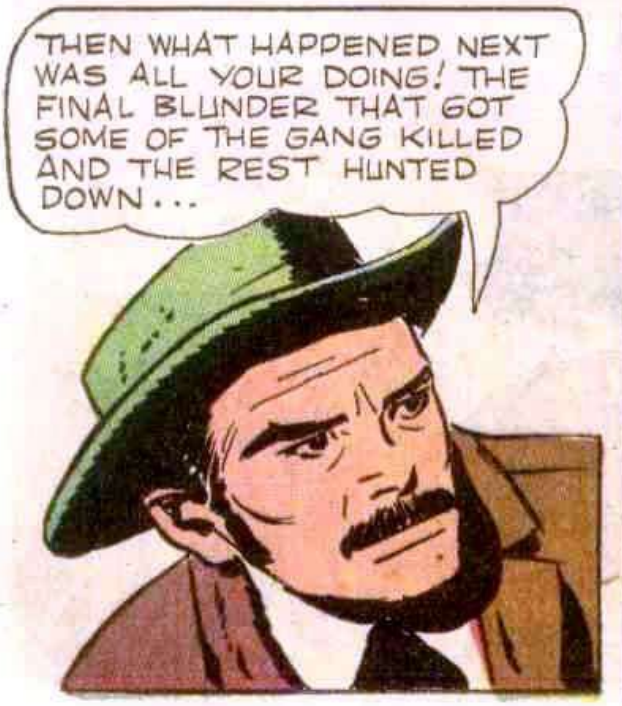

"BUT EVEN THAT NEWS DIDN'T DETER YOU, JESSE! YOU HAD TO GET REVENGE..."
HOWDY, MR. ASKEW!
WHY, JESSE! GLAD TO SEE YOU!

YOU WON'T BE WHEN YOU LEARN WHY I'M HERE! YOU HELPED TO KILL MY HALF-BROTHER, ARCHIE!
NO! NO! I SWEAR IT! I DIDN'T!

YOU'RE A LIAR, TOO! I SAW YOU RIDING WITH THAT BUNCH! SAY YOUR PRAYERS, ASKEW!
BLAM!

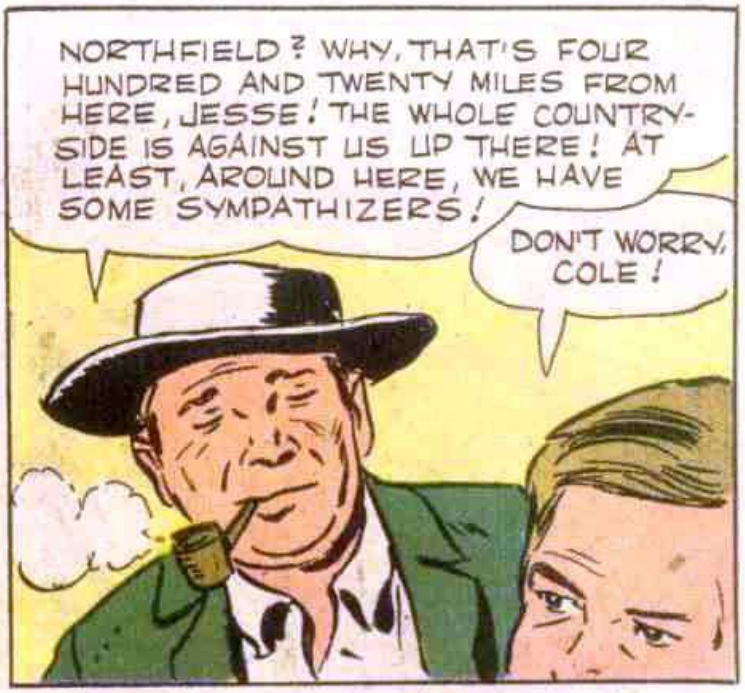
I ONLY WISH I KNEW WHO THE OTHERS WERE!

AND SO THE BILL DIDN'T PASS FOR OUR PARDON! WE WERE STILL OUTLAWS! WORSE OFF THAN BEFORE!


THEN WHAT HAPPENED NEXT WAS ALL YOUR DOING! THE FINAL BLUNDER THAT GOT SOME OF THE GANG KILLED AND THE REST HUNTED DOWN...

"IT WAS AT MY HOUSE IN CLAY COUNTY. YOU SENT OUT WORD AND GOT THE WHOLE GANG TOGETHER..."
BOYS, WHAT I'VE GOT TO SAY IS IMPORTANT! IT'LL MAKE US ALL RICH!

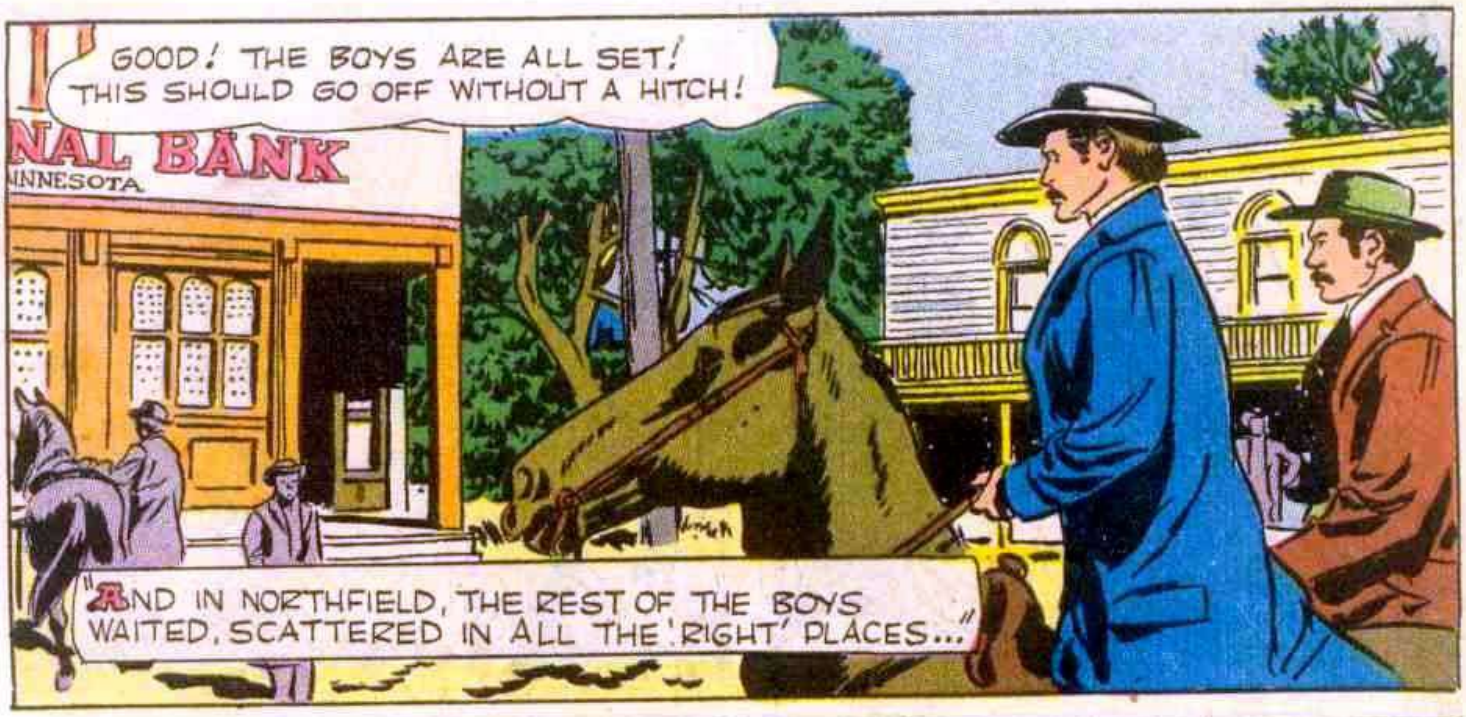
FRANK AND I HAVE SCOUTED THE BANK IN NORTHFIELD, MINNESOTA! IT'S LOADED WITH CASH! WE'LL BE RICH ENOUGH TO MAKE THIS OUR LAST JOB!


NORTHFIELD? WHY, THAT'S FOUR HUNDRED AND TWENTY MILES FROM HERE, JESSE! THE WHOLE COUNTRYSIDE IS AGAINST US UP THERE! AT LEAST, AROUND HERE, WE HAVE SOME SYMPATHIZERS!
DON'T WORRY, COLE!

BILL STILES KNOWS THAT COUNTRY LIKE A BOOK— HE CAN SHOW US THE BEST TRAILS TO MAKE OUR ESCAPE... WELL, WHAT ABOUT IT? DO YOU WANT TO GET RICH AND RETIRE OR NOT?
SOUNDS OKAY TO ME!
WELL... ALL RIGHT! BUT I'M NOT CRAZY ABOUT THE IDEA!

"FINALLY, THE WHOLE GANG AGREED AND GATHERED AROUND TO SEE THE PLANNING ON PAPER..."
NOW I FIGURE BASSHAM WILL STAY OUTSIDE TOWN AND CUT THE TELEGRAPH WIRES AT THE SAME TIME WE HIT THE BANK!

"A FEW DAYS LATER WE WERE ALL SET, AND RODE THE LONG WAY TO NORTHFIELD, THEN ENTERED IN TWO'S AND THREE'S..."
REMEMBER YOUR POSITIONS, BOYS! WE DON'T WANT TO LOOK SUSPICIOUS!


GOOD! THE BOYS ARE ALL SET! THIS SHOULD GO OFF WITHOUT A HITCH!
NAL BANK
NNESOTA
"AND IN NORTHFIELD, THE REST OF THE BOYS WAITED, SCATTERED IN ALL THE 'RIGHT' PLACES..."

THIS IS IT! I'LL GO IN WITH BILL WHEN I GET A SIGNAL FROM BOB!
BE CAREFUL, JESS!

YES, SIR? WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

JUST OPEN THE VAULT AND THERE WON'T BE ANY TROUBLE!
BUT I CAN'T! THE VAULT HAS A TIME LOCK!

CLOSE THE DOOR, BOB! THIS'LL TAKE A FEW MINUTES!
I TELL YOU, I CAN'T OPEN IT! IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

NO? MAYBE THIS WILL MAKE YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND!
OH-H-H!

LISTEN! THAT CAME FROM THE BANK!
THE DOORS ARE CLOSED! THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG!
OH-H-H!

IT'S A ROBBERY! THE BANK! HELP!
SHUT UP!

A HOLDUP! GET THE SHERIFF!
HELP!

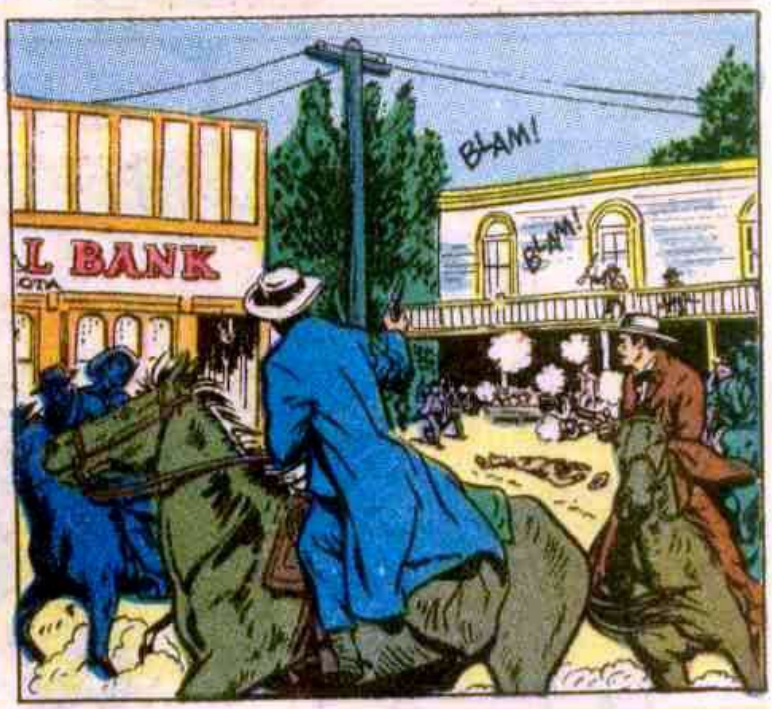
JESSE! GET OUT OF THERE QUICK! THE WHOLE TOWN KNOWS!
BANK

COME ON! LET'S TRAVEL!

I'LL PUT AN END TO YOUR ROBBING!
I'VE GOT TO GET SOMETHING!

SORRY, MISTER! YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE THAT!
BLAM!

HURRY UP! THEY GOT BILL STILES AND CLELL!

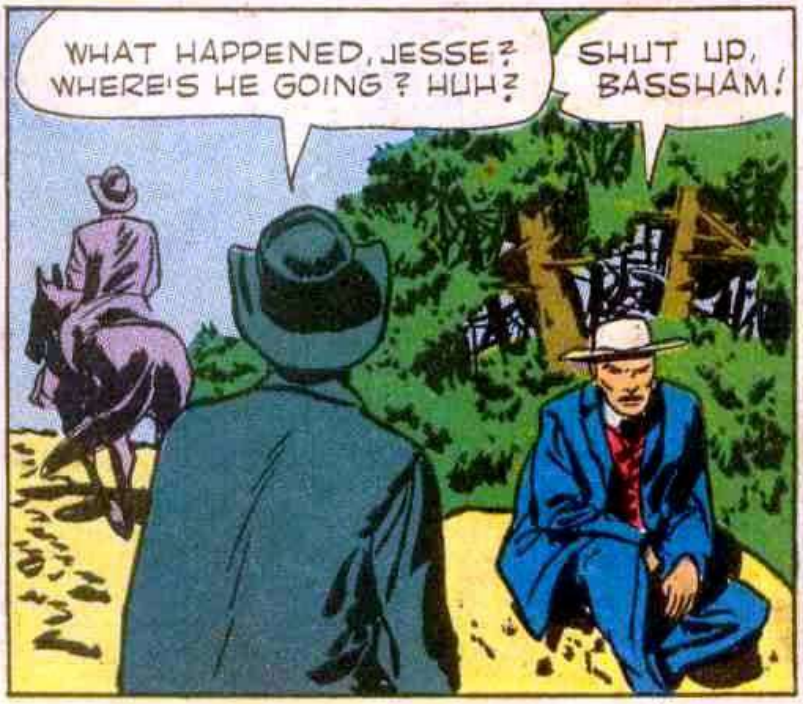

BANK
BLAM!
BLAM!

LOOK AT THAT! THAT FOOL BASSHAM DIDN'T EVEN GET ALL THE WIRES CUT! I OUGHT TO KILL HIM!
HOLD YOUR TEMPER, JESSE!

GEE, I'M SORRY, JESSE! GUESS MY WATCH STOPPED OR SOMETHING!
NEVER MIND, BASSHAM! JUST COME WITH US! THERE'S A POSSE ON OUR TRAIL!

YES, SOMETIMES I THINK YOU *WANTED* TO GET YOURSELF KILLED, AND TAKE EVERYONE ELSE YOU COULD ALONG WITH YOU!
THAT'S ENOUGH, FRANK!

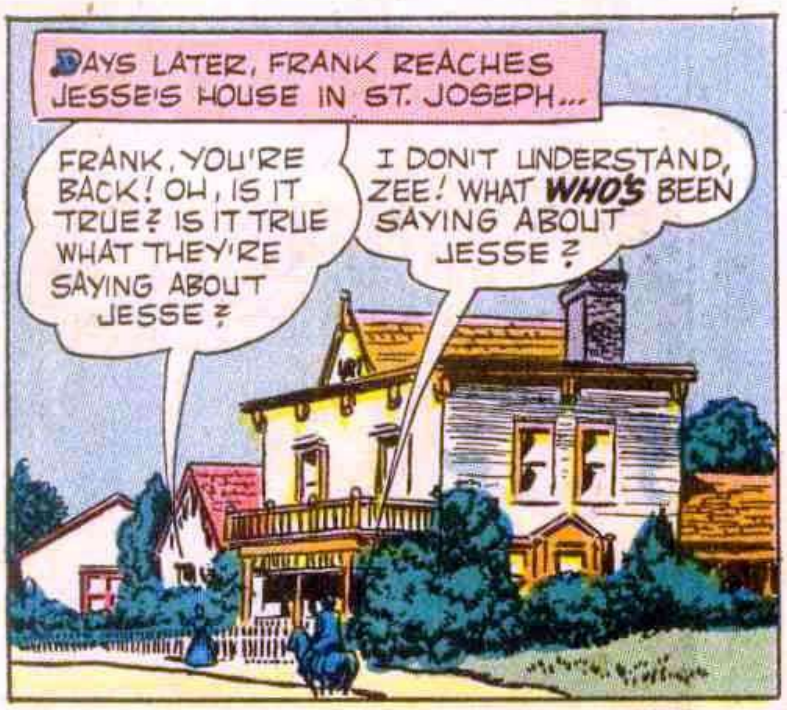
IT SURE IS ENOUGH! I'M GOING ON BY MYSELF! I DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO DO WITH YOU, JESSE!
THAT'S ALL RIGHT WITH ME!


WHAT HAPPENED, JESSE? WHERE'S HE GOING? HUH?
SHUT UP, BASSHAM!

FRANK HAD RIDDEN A SHORT DISTANCE WHEN...
A SHOT!
BLAM!

MAYBE I'D BETTER GO BACK...

NO, IT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE! IT JUST DOESN'T MATTER!


DAYS LATER, FRANK REACHES JESSE'S HOUSE IN ST. JOSEPH...
FRANK, YOU'RE BACK! OH, IS IT TRUE? IS IT TRUE WHAT THEY'RE SAYING ABOUT JESSE?
I DON'T UNDERSTAND, ZEE! WHAT WHO'S BEEN SAYING ABOUT JESSE?

LOOK! THE NEWSPAPERS!
I— I'M SORRY, ZEE! I SHOULD NEVER HAVE LEFT HIM!
JAMES KILLED

I GUESS I KNEW ALL THE TIME THAT IT WOULD END THIS WAY, SOONER OR LATER! I-I THINK I'LL GO TO SEE HIS MOTHER, FRANK!
I'LL HELP YOU GET READY, ZEE!

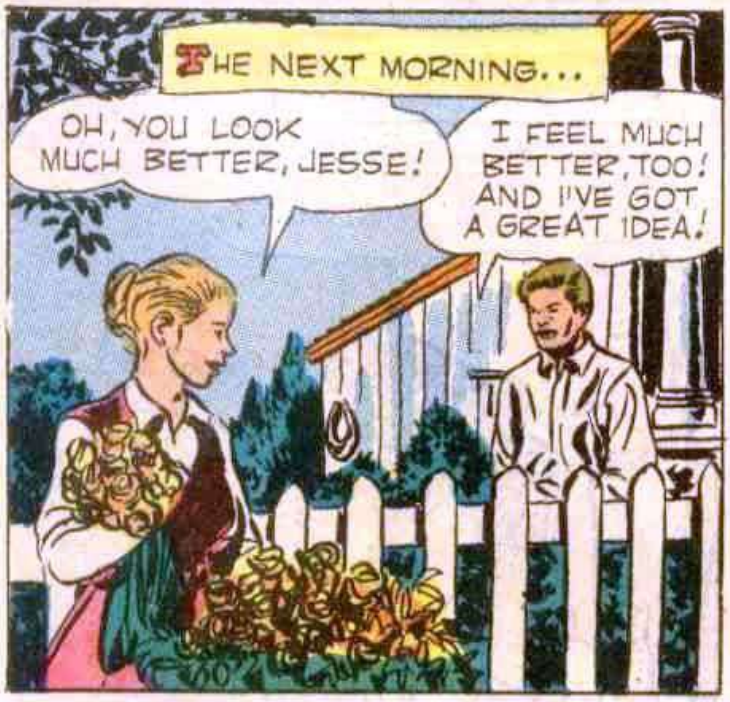
THAT SAME NIGHT...
I'D BETTER HURRY IF I'M GOING TO CATCH THAT TRAIN! OH, WHAT'S THAT?
KNOCK!
KNOCK!

JESSE!
YES, IT'S ME!

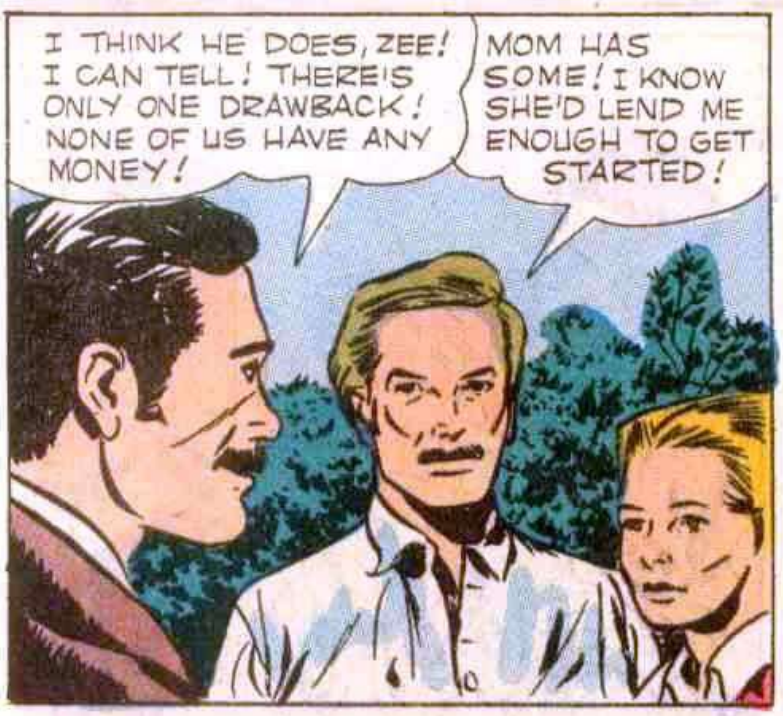
TAKE IT EASY NOW, JESS!
I'LL GET HIM SOMETHING TO EAT!

THE PAPERS SAY YOUR BODY WAS FOUND! WHAT HAPPENED, JESS?
I'LL... I'LL TELL YOU LATER, FRANK! I'M SO TIRED!

EAT THIS NOW! EVERY BIT OF IT! THEN YOU'RE GOING TO BED AND SLEEP!
ZEE! YOU LOOK SO WONDERFUL! AND BRINGING SOUP, JUST LIKE THAT TIME LONG AGO!


THE NEXT MORNING...
OH, YOU LOOK MUCH BETTER, JESSE!
I FEEL MUCH BETTER, TOO! AND I'VE GOT A GREAT IDEA!

THEY ALL THINK I'M DEAD, SO I'M GOING TO LEAVE IT THAT WAY... START A NEW LIFE! I WANT TO GET A FARM AND SETTLE DOWN!
THAT SOUNDS WONDERFUL! DO YOU REALLY MEAN IT, JESSE?

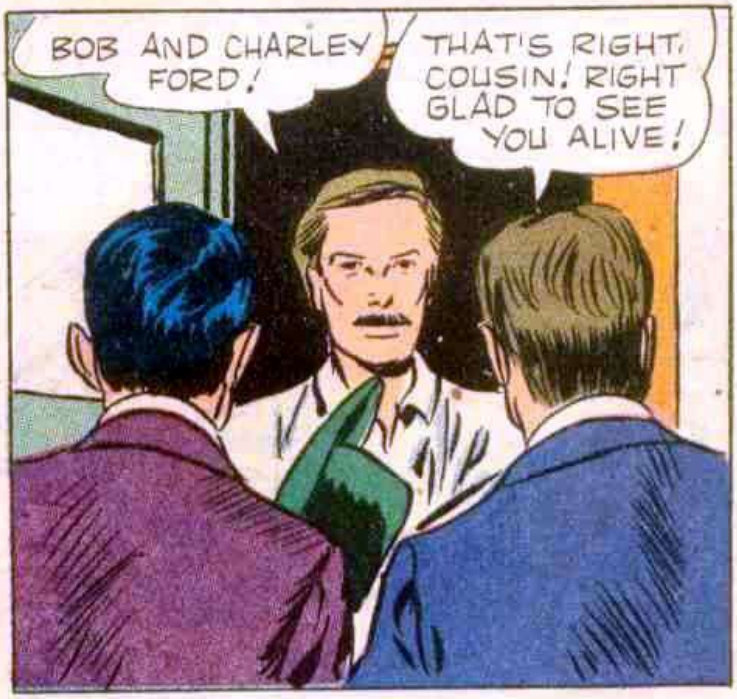

I THINK HE DOES, ZEE! I CAN TELL! THERE'S ONLY ONE DRAWBACK! NONE OF US HAVE ANY MONEY!
MOM HAS SOME! I KNOW SHE'D LEND ME ENOUGH TO GET STARTED!

I'LL RIDE TO SEE MOM WHILE YOU TWO ARE GETTING PACKED! SEE YOU IN A DAY OR TWO... WITH SOME MONEY!
WE'LL ALL BE READY!

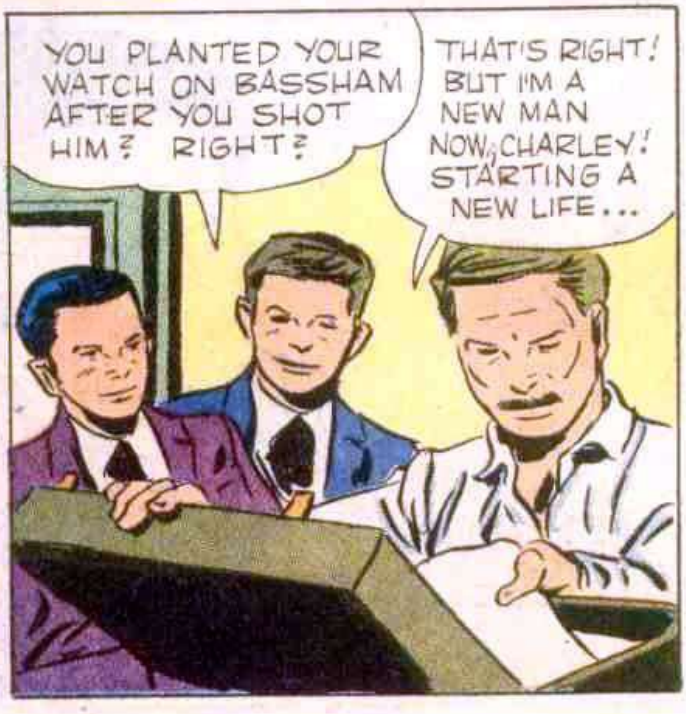
OH, I'M SO HAPPY! I'M GOING TO START PACKING RIGHT NOW!
I'LL HELP!

FEW DAYS LATER...
WELL, WE'RE ALL PACKED! FRANK SHOULD BE BACK TODAY!
I'LL GO UPSTAIRS AND GET THE CHILDREN READY! AND DON'T YOU FORGET TO TAKE DOWN THOSE PICTURES!

THE DOOR! HE'S BACK!
KNOCK! KNOCK!

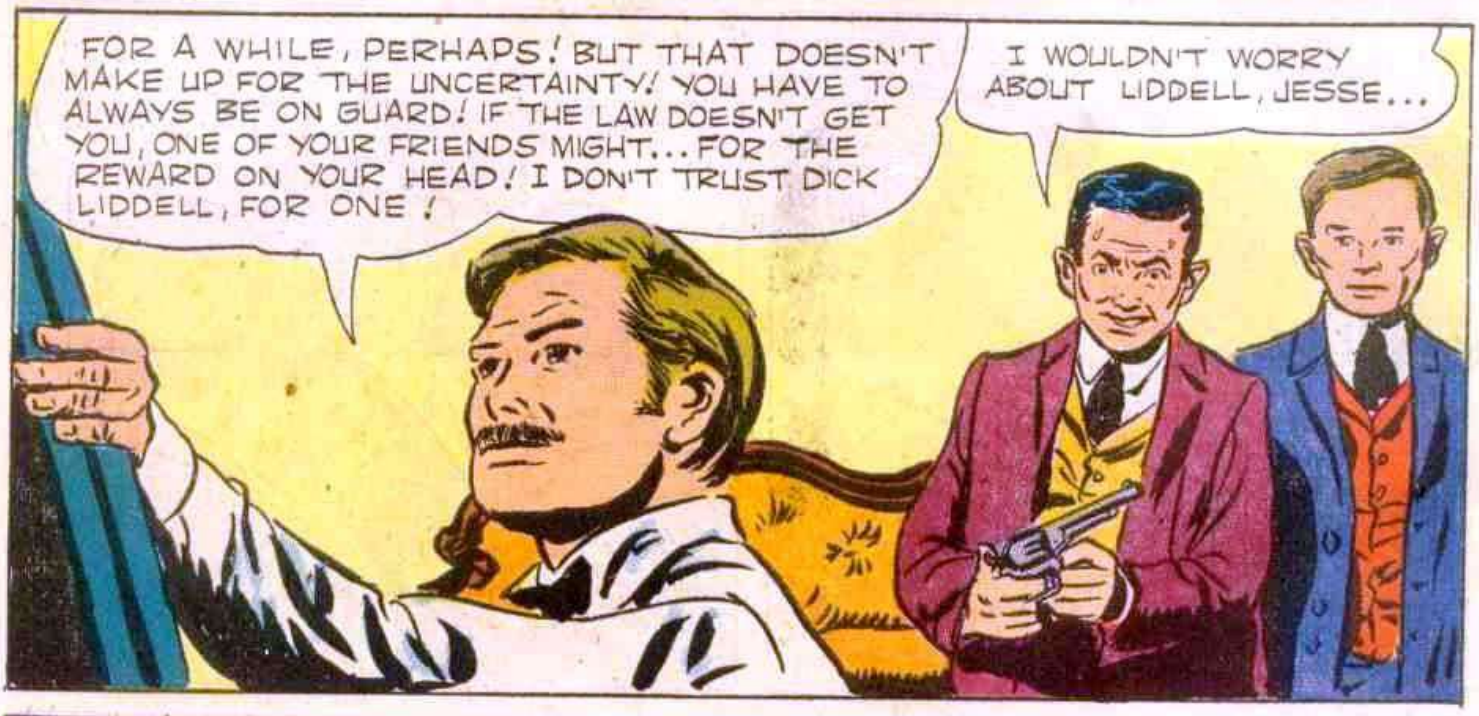

BOB AND CHARLEY FORD!
THAT'S RIGHT, COUSIN! RIGHT GLAD TO SEE YOU ALIVE!

I FIGURED IT WASN'T YOU THEY FOUND UP NORTH! DESCRIPTION SOUNDED LIKE BASSHAM!
YOU'RE REAL SMART, BOB! BUT I'M SORT OF BUSY RIGHT NOW!


YOU PLANTED YOUR WATCH ON BASSHAM AFTER YOU SHOT HIM? RIGHT?
THAT'S RIGHT! BUT I'M A NEW MAN NOW, CHARLEY! STARTING A NEW LIFE...

AND TO PROVE IT, I'M TAKING OFF THESE GUNS FOR GOOD! YOU CAN HAVE THEM TO REMEMBER ME BY!
NOW WE'LL NEVER GET A CHANCE TO RIDE WITH YOU, JESSE! I ALWAYS WANTED TO!

WELL, THANKS, CHARLEY, BUT TAKE MY ADVICE AND STAY ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE LAW!
DON'T TELL ME YOU DIDN'T ENJOY THE EXCITEMENT OF THE LIFE YOU'VE LED!


FOR A WHILE, PERHAPS! BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE UP FOR THE UNCERTAINTY! YOU HAVE TO ALWAYS BE ON GUARD! IF THE LAW DOESN'T GET YOU, ONE OF YOUR FRIENDS MIGHT... FOR THE REWARD ON YOUR HEAD! I DON'T TRUST DICK LIDDELL, FOR ONE!
I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT LIDDELL, JESSE...

HE'LL NEVER GET THE CHANCE!
BLAM!

I JUST SHOT JESSE JAMES! ME, BOB FORD! I SHOT HIM!
WHAT HAPPENED?
I DON'T KNOW! THAT'S MR. HOWARD'S HOUSE!
SOMETHING'S GONE WRONG! WHY IS THAT CROWD AROUND THE HOUSE?
EASY, MOM! WE'LL FIND OUT IN A MINUTE!

AND SO THE LIFE OF JESSE JAMES ENDED, BUT THE LEGEND GOES ON FOREVER... AND THE OBSERVER CAN ONLY DECIDE FOR HIMSELF... WAS JESSE A COLD-BLOODED KILLER BY NATURE, OR WAS HE DRIVEN TO HIS DEATH BY FATE? PERHAPS IT WILL NEVER BE KNOWN FOR SURE! BUT THE LAST WORDS OF THE OLD BALLAD SEEM TO REFLECT THE WAY MOST PEOPLE FEEL: "'TWAS A DIRTY LITTLE COWARD
WHO SHOT MISTER HOWARD,
AND LAID POOR JESSE IN HIS GRAVE."

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